

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT

CD NO.

COUNTRY

Austria

DATE DISTR.

27 July 1954

SUBJECT

Return of Soviet Turbo-Drilling Rigs from SMV to Rumania

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2

PLACE
ACQUIRED

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DATE OF INFO.

**SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT**

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

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1. At the beginning of 1954, four of five especially imported Soviet turbo-drilling rigs had been set up at Zwerndorf in the EEB Matzen area of the Soviet Oil Administration (SMV) to put under control a well which had been erupting since 15 March 1952.¹ This eruption had occurred after drilling had been carried to a depth of 1,400 meters. Large pieces of brown coal and rocks were thrown up from the 40-centimeter-wide hole and amixture of salt water and natural gas that rose occasionally as high as 50 meters with a pressure of 160 atmospheres. Gray sand was also thrown up in the eruption.
2. Czech oil field operators registered a complaint that the pressure in the field at Malacky, Slovakia, had decreased as a result of the continuous decrease of pressure in the subterranean salt lake which connected the two areas.
3. By tapping the eruptive well from two sides, and then filling its orifices as well as the two new outlets with a special cement mixture imported for this operation, the Soviet engineer in charge was able to bring the eruption to a standstill on 24 February 1954.
4. Personnel at the Bohrbetrieb Prottes were impressed by the exactness with which these turbo-drills bored, without deviating from the axis on which they were set. One turbo-drill was lost prior to bringing the eruption under control. The whole operation is supposed to have cost SMV between two and three million schillings.
5. Contrary to the expectations of personnel at SMV, the turbo rigs, which had been requested from the Soviet Union especially for this operation, were not assigned to other drilling operations at SMV. Instead, on 14 March 1954, the remaining nine turbo-drills were dispatched on two railroad cars to Oradea, Rumania.²
6. The Soviet crew and engineer assigned to operate these drilling rigs left Austrian on 10 March 1954.

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[REDACTED] Comment. Since a total of five drilling rigs were expected to be put into operation, it is assumed that each drilling rig was supplied with an extra turbo-drill. It has been alleged, also, that the turbo-drills were sent from Bucharest at Soviet direction instead of from the USSR, as previously reported.

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